WAGNER MEMORIAL.

1722.

1881.

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Charles W. Hutchinson.

Utica, N. Y.

GY-ANT-WÄ-KA.

At Fort Plain, October 20, 1881.

Johan Peter Wagner, born January 3, 1722, the son of Peter Wagner, a very early pioneer of the Mohawk valley, after serving for years as a patriot in the Revolutionary struggle, at first under Sir William Johnson, and later under General Herkimer, and after having been engaged in the battle of Oriskany and most of the other prominent battles of the time and region, died full of years and honors, and was buried at Palatine in a cemetery on the Wagner farm now owned by J. Harvey Smith. His eldest son, also Johan Peter, and like his father known as colonel, was born November 6, 1750, and died August 1, 1816, after a somewhat more quiet but hardly less useful life than his father's. He was buried by his side in the cemetery at Palatine. Some time ago it became necessary to take part of this old burying ground for a public purpose, and Jeptha R. Simms, the man of all in the Mohawk valley most interested in its historic events, called the matter to the attention of the Oneida Historical Society of Utica and suggested the eminent propriety of reinterring the bodies of father and son in the beautiful cemetery at Fort Plain. The Historical society cordially took up the matter and determined to show proper honor to these two men, most worthy of themselves and as founders of one of the greatest families in the Mohawk valley. The plans arranged for the interesting event were carried through October 20, 1881, and the day will not soon be forgotten by people in the region most interested.

Two special cars were attached at Utica to the 10 A. M. train, to take the members of the Historical society and the military escort from Utica to Fort Plain, and they were well filled. The society was represented by its vice-president, Hon. C. W. Hutchinson, the chairman of the executive committee, John F. Seymour, the secretary, S. N. D. North, Dr. I. S. Hartley, Dr. A. G. Brower, Leroy F. Shattuck, Dr. Charles B. Foster, J. V. H. Scovil, Dr. Edwin Hutchinson, Dr. Douglass, Max Lehmann and others.

Westminster

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General Dering was represented by a detailed staff consisting of Major Sherrill, Major Pomeroy and Captains Eaton and Spriggs. The Utica Citizens' Corps was represented by Major Everts and his staff, Lieutenant Bagg, Lieutenant Gillmore, Lieutenant Munson, Chaplain Gardner, Surgeon West and Lieutenants Storrs, Kincaid, McQuade, Coggeshall and Stevens. The Hutchinson Light Guards, Company B, of the Twenty-sixth battalion, in command of Captain John W. Gossin, acted as military escort, and was accompanied by the battalion band. General C. W. Darling, as chairman of the committee of arrangements for the Utica party, was in command for the day, and was accompanied by General W. H. Christian, also a member of the committee.

On arriving at Fort Plain, the party was met at the depot by Jeptha R. Simms, William Clark, Rev. Dr. Wortman, Dr. Morgan Snyder, Horace L. Greene, Hon. Webster Wagner, John B. Haslett and Simeon Tingue, the Fort Plain executive committee, and a procession was formed, President Hutchinson marching in front with the members of the executive committee, followed by the Historical society and the Military. Two hearses bore the bodies of the Revolutionary hero and his son, a guard of honor marching with each. Arriving at the Reformed Dutch church, Rev. Dr. Wortman's, all entered, and, with the people from the town, it was comfortably filled.

J. R. Simms' Address.

After the reading of the ninety-first Psalm by Rev. G. L. Roof, D. D., of Troy, J. R. Simms delivered the address of welcome, in which he showed the appropriateness of such a ceremony taking place on the day selected. He said:

In behalf of the Fort Plain committee of reception on this interesting occasion, I take great pleasure in welcoming to our village this delegation of the Oneida Historical Society and its friends and escort, who have come hither on a sacred and commendable enterprise, to wit:—the re-interment in a more befitting place, of the remains of some of our heroic pioneer settlers.

The time chosen for this ceremony seems a very proper one, since we are in the midst of a galaxy of most interesting centennial events. One hundred years ago yesterday, at Yorktown, Va., the British lion crouched beneath the American eagle. One hundred and one years ago yesterday, was fought in the

adjoining town of Palatine, scarcely three miles distant, the battle of Stone Arabia; in which the interpid and brave Colonel Brown, borne down by overwhelming numbers of the enemy under Sir John Johnson, fell a most generous and willing martyr to the cause of civil liberty. One hundred years ago next Tuesday, occurred the battle of Johnstown, between the Americans under the daring Willet and the British, tories and Indians under Major Rose, in which the latter were defeated; and three days after, far up the West Canada creek, a just retribution for his damning deeds, sealed the fate of the infamous Walter Butler.

It were impossible on this occasion to notice even a few of the many thrilling and important events which transpired in the Mohawk valley, after the bloody battle at Oriskany, in which the patriots whose memory we now honor took an interesting part. But I may say that some of the most unique and noteworthy incidents that ever occurred in any place or age, transpired in the Mohawk river settlements during our seven years' war for the establishment of civil liberty. Many were the hair-breath escapes from the stealthy tory and Indian foeman; while many, very many representatives of families decimated by the tomhawk and scalping-knife, were conveyed at the end of Indian tump-lines through the unbroken wilderness, who, after suffering incredible hardships, were incarcerated for months—yes, for years, in Canadian prisons. Montgomery, Herkimer and Fulton counties were rife with such scenes of carnage and blood. I can not linger to single them out, but will barely make allusion to one of the most sanguinary.

About the 1st of July, 1781, Captain Solomon Woodworth, of the Johnstown settlements, a very brave partisan officer, went on his first expedition with his new command, in search of the foeman. Without awaiting breakfast, with a lunch in their knapsacks, himself with his command of forty brave men and six Oneida Indians, moved in the early morning from Fort Dayton up the West Canada creek, and was at the end of a few hours drawn into a defile—surrounded, and his command nearly all slain or captured. Twenty-five of his men, including himself, were the next day buried in one grave, a few miles from Eaton's corners, by Captain Putman and another company of rangers, then at Fort Dayton. But I can assure the hearer that a thousand and one of the startling and blood-curdling events, which transpired in the war on this then frontier of civilization, will, as I trust, ere long be published for their amusement and consideration.

I repeat, this is a befitting time to honor the memory and deeds of known patriots; and that country will be found the most prosperous and happy which properly cherishes and perpetuates the memory of its heroic ancestry, whether in words or on enduring marble. But I can not trespass upon time, as I anticipate that a rich feast of words is in store for us.

Again I say to our distinguished guests—you are thrice welcome to the hospitality of the village of Fort Plain.

Rev. Dr. Wortman stated that it had seemed to him becoming that the music should belong to the period in which the men to be reinterred belonged, and the choir would sing "The Dying Christian" to an old tune. This was performed with considerable spirit and with a similar lugubrious strain, sung later, formed a complete demonstration to the audience that church music has immensely improved within a half century. Dr. Isaac S. Hartley offered prayer, beseeching heaven that the liberty for which these men fought and labored, might continue always to bless their descendants.

Peter G. Webster, of Fort Plain, being introduced made a brief speech, thanking the Historical Society for its assistance, and the Utica Citizens' Corps and the military escort for their kind attendance. Mr. Webster connected the historic events which the day commemorated with the great rebellion, and called to mind the bravery shown by Utica soldiers and the readiness with which they and their comrades through the Mohawk valley took up their arms in defense of the country. Mr. Webster strongly commended every effort to bring to the minds of the present and of future generations the noble deeds done by their fathers. He spoke with feeling and force, and in closing, read a portion of a speech which he delivered on a similar occasion many years ago.

Rev. Dr. Wortman's Address.

After Mr. Webster, Rev. Dennis Wortman, D. D., spoke with force and appropriateness: We stand to-day upon historic ground. From the point where the dust of the old Revolutionary soldiers shall henceforth repose, we may gaze well about us in every direction, over valley and hill, and nowhere may we turn our eyes but they behold some spot associated with Revolutionary

suffering or heroism, or even pre-Revolutionary history. Here the old fort stood whence this town derives its name, called first Fort Plain, and afterwards Fort Rensselaer. Yonder, further on, the old church and the graveyard where, during and before that epoch, the living worshipped and the dead were buried. Some two miles further, and across the river, near Palatine church stood old Fort Wagner, home and fortress both—just as now and evermore the home is the divinely protected fortress of our national virtue, integrity and strength. It stands yet, a strong stone house, that stood in those olden days as a protection against the foe. Skirting off well to the right, a few miles, you can see the old church of Stone Arabia, its predecessor burned a hundred years last October, while many of the people all about were massacred. Further to the right still, near Palatine Bridge, you come upon the battle ground to which our veteran Fort Plain historian, Mr. Simms, has alluded, the battle ground where, under Colonel Brown, the Stone Arabians resisted so courageously the tory and Indian bands. Off toward the southwest the eye passes beyond Forts Clyde, Failing, Ehle and the Fort Rensselaer of Canajoharie on to the village of Currytown that was destroyed; and, yet further, to Cherry Valley, almost half of whose population were killed or captured by the brutal Butler, Brant being at that massacre, but an unwilling and protesting participant. I say it is historic ground. It has a pre-Revolutionary interest. All this valley teemed with a vigorous Indian population, one of the most powerful tribes on the continent. Their bones and implements of war seem so abundant as almost to make an Indian cemetery of many of these hillsides, while out beyond Ephratah a score of mounds indicate even a possibly pre-Indian occupation. Still, above all else, this is Revolutionary ground. In view of all hardships then endured in this whole region, I have accustomed myself to call it the very Shenandoah valley of that immortal conflict.

Not inappropriate were it then for us to gather here at this time to call up the memories of those days to localize and fix this valley history; to bring to the thoughts of our present and fast passing times the dangers and the heroisms of those days and gather therefrom fresh inspiration for our work and welfare of to-day. Not the less fitting does it become because we are able to localize these matters about the life of one who had a considerable prominence in the affairs of that time, and who was the honored ancestor of so many honored descendants who abide among us to this day. Meanwhile, a more beneficent use shall we make of

this occasion, if we be thereby inspired to move out unto a higher nobleness and a thorougher manhood. This, too, is a historic time—or shall be, if we so choose to make it. The Indians are no longer here. The tories are dead. The Revolution is past. But tbere still are foes to fight, errors to subdue, holy truths and principles to establish, grand victories to gain, honors to achieve, divine purposes to serve.

Ours is the heroism that made our fathers illustrious! Ours the fortitude that carried them to victory! And whether, a hundred years from now, the place of our burial is known, or utterly forgotten, may the goodness we shall have done be buried in many hearts, and in many lives make itself manifest in glad and everlastingly recurring resurrections.

He reminded his audience that they were seated in a church which stood on the spot where was the original Reformed Dutch church, which stood in the time of the Wagners. He showed, too, the original deed for the church lot, a very old document, "gnawed by other teeth than those of time," and which but lately came into his possession. In concluding, Dr. Wortman gave the Historical Society a cannon ball found on the battlefield of Stone Arabia, one of the few relics in his possession belonging to that period. Dr. Wortman expressed pleasure at being able to introduce "the orator of the occasion, Hon. Charles W. Hutchinson, the energetic and accomplished vice-president of the Oneida Historical Society."

Address of Hon. C. W. Hutchinson.

Mr Hutchinson having expressed the thanks of his society for the relic given it, spoke as follows:

We are here assembled in the heart of the Mohawk valley, to pay proper tribute of respect to the memory of two individuals whose influence upon its history, and whose civic and military service during the troublous times of our Revolutionary war are deserving proper recognition. Circumstances having necessitated the removal of their remains from their burial place upon lands so long in the possession of the family, to a fitting spot in your beautiful cemetery overlooking those lands so many years their home. This day being so near the anniversary of the battle of Johnstown, with which their name is connected, make the ceremonies of this occasion unusually impressive. It appeals to our patriotism by recalling the history of the first settlement of this

valley by the Palatinates, and their noble Christian and patriotic deeds, of which, after a lapse of over a century, in a clear and undoubted record, has been preserved, and it is to be hoped that a more personal history will soon be written to perpetuate and record in a fitting manner the story of the lives and sacrifices of these early patriots, to whose sturdy character and invincible energy, we to such great extent owe the civil and religious freedom we now enjoy. And it is properly a public duty, for at this time, in the sixth generation the trace of family lineage is so slight, and became so diffused by collateral connection, that any tribute to their memory should be in the broadest sense public in its character.

In casually tracing at this time the lineage of some of the Palatine families, there are found at present to be between one and two thousand descendants in a single family line, and in the period of one hundred and sixty years the blood of the Palatinates permeates the veins of whole communities from Schenectady to "the crossing of the old ford" at Utica, called by the Indians Yah-nun-dah-sis.

In addressing you, therefore, we feel that any new fact which may be presented relating to the personal and historic events which have taken place in the valley of Mohawk should be received with interest.

The story of a man's life is usually written in the water. At his death a moment's troubled surface, then all becomes placid as before, and in a few years all memory of him except perhaps his name or a record of his good deeds has passed into oblivion forever.

But the history of each individual of the early settlers of this section stands out boldly in striking contrast. Their lives were constant struggles against opposing forces and adverse circumstances, but which brought out persistent determination of purpose, unity of ideas, and the closest harmony in united action, when a result was to be attained for a religious or a patriotic purpose.

The two Palatinate families of Johan Peter Wagner and William Fox removed from Schoharie to the Mohawk valley, about the year A. D. 1723, and settled in the town of Palatine, near Palatine church some two miles west of this village, Fox settling on the easterly side of the Garoga creek (a part of which is now known as the Newkirk farm), and Wagner settling about a half-mile easterly of the creek (a part of which is now occupied by Harvey Smith

and Chauncey Wagner.) The lands occupied extending from the Mohawk river several miles northerly. We find from the copy of the original deed that John Conrad Wiser, Jr., Jan Jacokop, John Jost Peters, Conrad Rigarts, Nicholas Fuller, Henry Mayor, Angerian Smith, Rutles Raving, Peter Spice, Peter Waggoner, Peter Conneaskern and Jacob Warynoo, all high Dutchmen or Palatines, took a deed from the five nations by their sachems, dated July 9, 1722, of the land beginning at Ostenrogen, or the first carrying place to the westerly end of it, to Gauerdagavien, being about twenty-four English miles upon both sides of the Mohagus river.

And this is the first recorded mention of this branch of the Wagner family. The traditional and subsequent history I now note.

Johan Peter Wagner, the Palatine and ancestral head of this family, was born at Braunsback, in Wirtemburg, October 4, 1687. He was married with Maria Elizabetha Laucs, who was born at Oehringen in 1686. They emigrated to America 1709 and settled at New Paltz, Ulster county, and afterwards, in the year 1714, removed to Schoharie county where they remained until their settlement at Palatine in 1723. About the year 1750 he built his residence the old stone dwelling, (now standing and in a good state of preservation.) It was quite similar in style with the well-known houses of Frey, Ehle, Van Alstine, and Wormouth, which were erected about the same period.

This Wagner house is said to be the oldest house now standing in the State of New York, west of Fort Plain. In early times, and during the wars, it was stockaded and was known as Fort Waggoner, and a block house was said to have been situated some fifty feet southeasterly of the dwelling, and that some of its timbers are still in the barn buildings on the farm. And a part of the old foundation still remains.

On the Wagner farm in the rear of this house is a peculiar range of hills, called by the German settlers the *Steiler-Berg* or steep hill, ranging east to west for about half a mile. These hills, on excavation, are found to contain Indian relics of the pre-historic period, and recent discovery has opened two burial grounds of different generations of the tribes.

It was upon one of the most prominent of these hills that the old burying ground of the early settlers of this portion of Palatine was situated; a very few graves having inscribed tablets, hundreds being marked with two rough stones, without other mark or record.

Colonel Wagner's family consisted of eight children, as follows:

Anna Margaretha, born April 15, 1712; married Heinrich Tillenbeck.

Maria Catharina, born August 18, 1714; married Georg Rosner.

Utilia, born August 16, 1716; married Isaac Reit.

Catharina Elizabetha, born September 10, 1718; married Johan Georg Stockenchild.

Maria Magdalena, born January 4, 1720; married John Failing.

Johan Peter, born January 8, 1722; married Barbara Elizabetha Dockstader.

Martha Elizabetha, born January 24, 1724; married Georg Saltsman.

Colonel Peter Wagner, died May 23, 1813, aged ninety-one years, four months and nineteen days. And the following receipt is still preserved:

PALANTINE, 29 May, 1813.

Received of Colonel Peter Waggoner nine dollars in full for six gallons of rum for the berriing of old Colonel Peter Waggoner.

J. WHEELER.

L 3: 12 0.

This Johan Peter, was the only son of his father the pioneer. He was generally known as Colonel Wagner. And herewith we copy from the records of the Evangelical Lutheran German congregation in Stone Arabia and translated from the original German, the following record:

The Mr. Colonel Johan Peter Wagoner was born 8th of January, 1722. The godfathers were Peter Knieskerken, Gottfried Fiedler, Maria Lies Knieskerken, [Free].

Stone Arabia, March 2, 1811.

PETER WILHELM, Domeier.

He was married with Maria Elizabetha Dockstader in the year 1750. They had nine children, namely: Johan Peter, Johan Georg, Elizabetha, Maria Margaretha, Johan Joseph, Johan William, Catharine, and Helen or Laney. And it is to the memory of Colonel Johan Peter Wagner and of his eldest son also named Johan Peter, and of their remains we are now paying this tribute of respect and Christian duty.

Upon their graves no evanescent flowers are laid; a crown of laurels is the fitting tribute to the record of their lives, a brief resume of which connected with public events I shall now partially present.

The first public record of Colonel Wagner is his commission as second lieutenant in the second battalion of the county of Albany,

which was under the command of Sir William Johnson. It is dated August 25, A. D. 1748, and is signed by George Clinton, the colonial governor. He was undoubtedly engaged in the French and Indian war of 1756.

The colonel was a staunch patriot during the Revolutionary war, and unswerving in his devotion to the cause of his country. He was one of the committee of safety for Tryon county, and was present as a delegate from the Palatine district at its first meeting held at the house of Adam Loucks, at Stone Arabia, August 27, 1774.

There being present Christopher Yates, chairman, Peter Waggoner, Isaac Paris, John Frey, Jacob Klock, Andrew Fink, jr., Christopher W. Fox, George Ecker, jr., Andrew Reeber, Daniel McDougle and Anthony Van Fechten.

And he is also recorded as being present at the first general meeting of the committee in the Canajoharie district, held June 2, 1775, at the house of Werner Tygert, near the upper Indian Castle.

Colonel Wagner was engaged in the battle of Oriskany and held the position of lieutenant colonel of the second battalion from the Palatine district, of which Jacob Klock was colonel. His oldest son, Johan Peter, was second lieutenant in the first company of this regiment, and his second son, Johan Georg, was a volunteer in his command; the latter, was wounded in the forearm by a bullet, and on account of it received a pension. Joseph another son ran away from home and joined the command at the German Flatts, but being only sixteen years of age and the only son old enough to afford any protection to the family, his father promptly sent him back to look after the women and children.

Lieutenant Colonel Wagner, it is said, took command of the first battalion of the Canajoharie district at the battle of Oriskany, which was under the command of Colonel Ebenezer Cox, after General Herkimer, who was its first colonel, was wounded. He was also one of the grand jury at the first court of quarter sessions under the new State Government held at Johnstown September 8, 1788, and represented his district as a Member of Assembly at the second, third and fourth sessions, in the years 1777, 1778, 1779, 1780, 1781.

A reference to some of the local history of this portion of the State may interest some of those here assembled. Those lands upon the south side of the river were in the possession of the Mohawks, whose easterly or lower Castle was called by them Te-äh-ton-tä-ló-ga, situated near Fort Hunter. The westerly or

upper Castle was called Gä-né-ga-hä-gä, and was situate on the east bank of the How-a-da-ga creek in the town of Danube, some two miles easterly of the residence of General Nicholas Herkimer, and was the former residence of King Hendrick and Captain Joseph Brant. The village of Fort Plain was called by the Iroquois Twä-dä-a-la-há-lä, "The Fort on a Hill." The Mohawk Middle Castle being situate on the easterly bank of the O-squä-go creek overlooking the village, and was called Gä-nä-jo-hí-e, and was the junction of the great Central and Susquehanna Indian trails.

Here, near the Reformed German Church, familiarly known to you as the Sand Hill Church, lived the Indian trader John Abeel, who married for his first wife the daughter of a Seneca Sachem, and whose sons were Teh-wun-yars, who was one of the fifty hereditary Sachem of the Iroquois, and was the leading military Sachem of the Confederacy; and Gy-ant-wä-ka, John (Abeel), the Cornplanter, the great war chief, and their half brother by Indian lineage was Gä-ne-o-di-yo, "The Prophet." It was during the invasion of the tories and regulars, under the command of Colonel John Johnson, and the Indians, under the commands of the Chiefs Thä-yen-dä-né-gea and Gy-ant-wä-ka, in August the year of 1780, that the Indians took John Abeel prisoner and burned his residence and other buildings, but his son soon released him and sent his father with an escort safely home. Abeel's daughter ~~Maria~~, by his second wife, married Joseph Wagner, who resided in the old Paris mansion in this village for many years.

The following correspondence, taken from the originals still in the possession of the family, relating to these incursions just mentioned are of historic interest, and while curious in style, they are imbued with a spirit of rare force and determination in their quaint expression.

PALATINE, May 28th, 1780.

A Return for Amunition for the men which are gethered at the house of George Klock—13 men.

Sir Col. Klock desired me to call upon you for Amunition, as you had trawn for all the men in his Reg't living upwards from Fox's. Remain

Sir your Humble Servt,

JACOB G. KLOCK.

To Col. Peter Waggoner.

PALATINE, 26 June, 1789.

Sir, I do not doubt but you know that our scout made a discovery of the Enemy this afternoon near our Quarters. I Emediately on the endeligence send a few lines to Col Clyde Informing him of the aproge of the Enemy, and also desired some Assistance of him, he Emediately send 18 men which arrived here.

Capt Diffendorf with his Company Lise at Cox's, which we send for to come over this Evening. now I desire you would send all the yung abble men to-morrow by day braek from all the forts from you up. In order to durn out at day braek to attack the Enemy, as all the men here mean to durn out if we could be Leetle more Ranforced. I should be glad if you desire Col Klock to send some men from Stoneraby also. No more as Remain

Sir your most Humble servt

Col Waggoner — JACOB G. KLOCK.

FORT PARIS July 13 1780

Sir pleas to order twelve of the smartest men that you have in the different forts under your command to Joyn Capt John Cassalms Company with four days provition with the quickest dispatch

from your friend and humble servant

To Lt Col Waggoner. — JACOB KLOCK Coll

FORT PARIS, June 5, 1781.

Sir: I this moment received a letter from the commanding officer at Johnstown, that the enemy have yesterday taken several prisoners and burnt some buildings in those quarters, and it is thought by him that they will make a stroke either at Stoneraby or else up the river, the enemy is sixty or seventy strong you'll give notice to all the Posts up above without a moment's delay. I am your

To Cols. Klock and Waggoner. — PETER S. DYGERT, Major.

FORT PARIS, Sept. 9, 1781.

Dr. Col: I received your order and did according to it. I have ordered every man, except yours namely John Shull's Adam Loux, Valentine Freligh and Henry Becker, whom I have kept for scouts. I am

Dr. Col. your very hbl servt

To Col Waggoner. — SEPRINUS KLOCK, Capt.

Lieutenant Johan Peter Wagner, the oldest son of Colonel Wagner, and afterwards also a colonel was a fitting scion of the sturdy old Dutch stock of his ancestry. He was born November 6, 1750, and his wife Nancy Bell was born in the year 1759. They were married in 1782 and had a family of nine children. He died at Palatine, August 1, 1816 at the age of sixty-seven years. He was appointed by General Nicholas Herkimer a special commissioner to confer with Captain Joseph Brant at the Unadilla conference in July, 1777, and as heretofore mentioned was second lieutenant in the first company of the regiment commanded by Colonel Klock, at the battle of Oriskany. He with his brothers Johan Georg, Johan Joseph, William and Johan appear also to have been engaged in several skirmishes in this portion of the valley, particularly that of Fox's Mills, situate some eight miles west of this village, where Sir John Johnson with his Tories and Indians had thrown up a small breast work, and awaited the approach of General Van Rensselaer and his militia. The Indians were first

driven from their position, and the works of the enemy would have been carried, when apparently without reason Van Rensselaer ordered his troops to fall back a mile and encamp. The young Wagners with many others of the young men indignant at the order refused to retreat and remained on the ground taking many prisoners during the night. In civil life we find the name of Lieutenant Wagner a member from the Palatine district in the convention of 1801, over which Aaron Burr presided. There is also preserved a record of some of the generous gifts of the two Colonels Wagner for public and religious purposes, to which allusion is proper.

The old stone Lutheran church at Palatine was erected August 18, 1770. Henrich Nellis gave a deed for the land necessary. The title being made to Colonel Peter Wagner, Andrew Reeber and John Eisenlord, churchwardens, January 2, 1769, and Peter Wagner, Andrew Reeber and Christian Nellis, Jr., were bowmasters in charge of the erection of the church. Colonel Wagner subscribing for that purpose £100, Mr. Reeber the same amount and Mr. Nellis giving £50, and his family are recorded as giving for the support of the minister, in the year 1797, as follows:

Peter Wagner, Sr., £1.4.0. George Wagner, £1.12.0, Peter Wagner, Jr., £1.04.0, John Wagner £1.04.0, Joseph Wagner £1.12.0, and the name of Joseph Wagner who was a member of assembly at the 29th session in 1806, is engraved upon the church bell, and the following receipt is still preserved:

To Colonel Peter Wagner, Jr:

Sir—Be pleased to pay unto Thomas Day or order the sum of eight pounds in behalf of Elihu Hall, which, when paid, will be in full for your subscription money you subscribed towards building Union Academy at Stone Arabia.

Stone Arabia, the 12th December, 1797. ANDREW FINCH.

This occasion also recalls to the memory of a grateful people the names of other patriots of the Mohawk Valley: Herkimer, Brown, Cox, Clyde, Visscher, Fonda, Snell, Frey, Dygert, Yates, Fink, Paris, Van Horne, Sammonds, Veeder, McDougle, Van Vechten, Klock, Ecker, Campbell, Diefendoff, Petry, Fox, Staring, Bellinger Timmerman and others.

The patriotic devotion of these men should be more closely studied by the present generation, and the monument at Oriskany, soon to be erected, is a fitting tribute to the memory of those who so nobly acted during times of savage allied Indian and tory invasion in the Valley of the Mohawk. They were almost undisciplined, and inadequately armed, taking all their sons able to

carry arms, marched through the unbroken forest to meet St. Leger and his disciplined army and its savage allies. Their arms were victorious, the invaders repulsed, and their righteous cause, contending for civil and religious freedom, was crowned with success.

These heroic men had all most dear to life pledged upon the success of their arms, and stood in the ranks by the side of their sons, in defense of their cause. Members of the committee of safety carried muskets as privates, and four of them of great prominence in public life, namely: Col. Isaac Paris, Samuel Billington, John Dygert and Jacob Snell were killed at Oriskany. Had they failed, in their patriotic efforts their homes would have been devastated, their property forfeited, and the lives of their wives and families left to the brutal mercy of a ruthless enemy.

In thus cursorily recalling your attention to these events of the early history of this valley in which these patriots were such active participants, if an increased interest in this subject has been produced in the minds of any who will now determine to collect and properly preserve in fitting places records and documents of historic interest, then these exercises will have wrought a fitting work and beneficent result. It was your distinguished historian and townsman, Jeptha R. Simms, Esq., who first suggested the necessity and propriety of this day's services. His life has been spent in a labor of love recording the history of the Mohawk Valley and of the early patriots. To his exertions the public owe one-tenth of the sum subscribed by individuals for the monument at Oriskany. And his life work of history should be conspicuously placed in the home of every descendant of the patriots of the Revolution. In order that the history of their early struggles may be recalled to the minds of your children that they be taught to emulate the heroism and noble character of these men to whose deeds and acts you owe all most dear to mankind, the enjoyment of free institutions and a government of the people.

The chairman introducing John F. Seymour, of Utica, he read the following letter from his brother, Hon. Horatio Seymour, the president of the Historical Society, who, to the regret of all, was unable to be present:

UTICA, Oct. 19, 1881.

DEAR SIR: I am sorry I can not go to Fort Plain to attend the ceremonies at the re-interment of the remains of Colonel Wagner. I am glad the people of the Mohawk valley are waking up to their duties and obligations to the memories of the brave and patriotic men who were once the defenders

of this region. A discredit now rests upon its inhabitants for their neglect. Elsewhere the people would be eager to give an interest to their homes in the eyes of the American people by marking and making known the spots which are connected with interesting events of American history. Those of the Mohawk valley surpass in interest and historic value the events of sections, whose people have piously and carefully preserved the histories of their fathers. I trust the work of putting up monuments and preserving history has now begun, and that the reproach resting upon our citizens will be removed, and that the descendants of these brave men of the Revolution will not permit strangers of other races and blood to do them honor.

Very truly yours,

HORATIO SEYMOUR.

Hon. J. R. Simms.

Continuing, Mr. Seymour said: Mr. Webster has asked when will generosity and generous patriotism awaken to do honor to the memory of the brave men of the Mohawk valley. He has alluded to the Oneida Historical Society as having this trust in hand, and in reference to this matter and to the monument which we hope to erect at Oriskany, to the memory of the men who fought there, I have to say that Congress has appropriated and paid over $4,200 for this object. I have to say also that the Legislature has granted $3,000 for the same purpose, and also to record the names of all engaged in the battle on such a monument. This last is given on condition that an equal amount be subscribed by private individuals. By indefatigable labors, your townsman, Mr. Simms, has secured $925 in this region, and at Herkimer, Utica and Rome $725 more has been subscribed and paid in. Counting other pledges, we need only about $800 more, and we are convinced that the people of the region will not let this opportunity go by till all is secured and a proper tribute to those who died there, made certain. Senator Wagner has informed me that he will increase his subscription, and doubtless others will follow him.

The chairman introduced his friend Rev. G. L. Roof, whose father gave to Canajoharie its former name of Roofville. Mr. Roof spoke of his pride in being a native of Montgomery county and in having had one relative who took part in the battle of Oriskany and another who was with General Herkimer when he died. Mr. Roof made a pleasant speech and expressed his conviction that the future of the country was to fulfil those words of Daniel Webster, beginning. "Liberty and Union, Now and Forever, One and Inseparable," words which did the speaker more credit even than all his great orations on the interpretation of the Constitution. The exercises at the church closed with the doxology.

Forming again the procession moved to the cemetery, in one of the most beautiful and sightly spots of which the bodies were laid in their final resting places. From that point, which is high above the town and the valley, the observer can see the spot, three miles or more away, from which the bodies were taken, and turning around, his eye falls on many of the places of most interest to the father and the son, when they were alive. No better place could have been found. Rev. Charles H. Gardner, Rector of Trinity Church, Utica, the Chaplain, offered a fervent prayer at the grave, and the coffins were lowered side by side, the military escort firing last volleys. The words which Mr. Gardner uttered were something like the following: Almighty and eternal God, in whom we trust, who art the God of nations and who hast regard for all that work righteousness, we ask for thy blessing on these closing ceremonies of a memorable occasion. As we commit these remains to the bosom of mother earth, with honorable tokens of esteem, wilt thou raise up in our hearts and the hearts of our children to a thousand generations, a strong regard for those qualities and characteristics which belonged to these heroes of liberty, and which belong to all exalted manhood. We thank thee, our heavenly father, for the good examples of these men. They fought a good fight, they finished their course, they now rest from their labors, awaiting the time when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. Be with all of us who are in the midst of a wicked world fighting against sin. Cloth us with the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; may we do valiantly under the captain of our salvation Jesus Christ, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the holy spirit, be with us now and forever. Amen.

It was now two o'clock or after, and the guests were glad to accept a cordial invitation to refreshment at the Fritcher Opera House. The bountiful lunch, kindly provided by some of the residents of the town, was served by its youth and beauty. The Utica party reached home about half-past six.